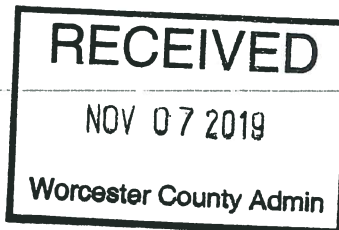


TOWN OF OCEAN CITY

The White Marlin Capital of the World



November 4, 2019

Worcester County Government Center
President Diana Purnell
1 W. Market St. Room 1103
Snow Hill, MD 21863

Dear President Purnell,

copy: Billy Birch
Jeff McMahon
Phil Thompson
Kathy Whitel
for review and recommendation

MAYOR
RICHARD W. MEEHAN

CITY COUNCIL

LLOYD MARTIN
President

MARY P. KNIGHT
Secretary

DENNIS W. DARE
ANTHONY J. DELUCA
JOHN F. GEHRIG, JR.
MATTHEW M. JAMES
MARK L. PADDACK

CITY MANAGER
DOUGLAS R. MILLER

CITY CLERK
DIANA L. CHAVIS, CMC

The Town of Ocean City's commitment to provide Fire and EMS Service to the West Ocean City Service Area was established when these services were provided by the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company. Today all EMS Service is no longer provided by volunteers but by paid members of the Ocean City Fire Company. This change has resulted in a number of issues that need to be addressed.

Out of Crew Status, or the number of times there are no available crews to respond to the next incoming call is a serious matter for any responding ambulance company. Continued development in West Ocean City and the subsequent increase in the number of medical responses required of Ocean City's ambulance crews to West Ocean City has led to an unacceptable increase in the Town's Out of Crew Status occurrences.

In calendar year 2018, Town of Ocean City paramedic units responded to 828 calls for service in West Ocean City, which represents 13.35% of the total number of medical responses made by Ocean City in calendar year 2018. The cost to provide that service was \$1,049,191. Revenue collected from West Ocean City patients totaled \$200,382. Grant revenue from the County totaled \$453,720 for the 520 credit runs and the 308 non-transports in the West Ocean City response area. Total revenue collected for service to West Ocean City, including the county grants for the West Ocean City service area, totaled \$654,012, leaving a deficit of \$395,089 for the taxpayers of Ocean City to cover. We would respectfully request to be reimbursed for this amount.

The Town has recently approved an additional crew on certain days of the week to minimize the Out of Crew Status occurrences in the off-season at a cost of \$160,000. A portion of that cost will also be directly attributable to medical responses to the West Ocean City service area. Our Paramedic staff has requested an additional shift of employees year-round specifically to minimize the number of Out of Crew Status occurrences. Adding another shift would add eighteen additional full-time staff, which would increase the Town's budget by \$1.6 million for salary and benefits, and would increase the cost for service to the West Ocean area by an additional \$213,600.

www.oceancitymd.gov



fire district?

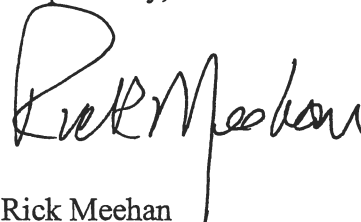
There are four potential solutions to this dilemma:

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1. Establishment of medical response districts throughout the County and development of a fee structure to support the costs of response to each area, separate from the County property tax bill.
2. Worcester County would reimburse Ocean City for the staffing and operational costs at the West Ocean City station (Station 5) on a year-round basis. Stationing three employees per day for 24 hours per day, 365 days per year would cost \$1.2 million in salary and benefits. In addition, the Town would require funding for an additional medic unit at an estimated cost of \$400,000. As Station 5 is not currently set up to handle 24 hour per day staffing, modifications would also need to be made to the station.
3. Direct payment to the Town on an annual basis for the deficit attributable to service to West Ocean City. This year, that payment would be \$395,089 over and above the County grants specifically for service to West Ocean City.
4. Revision of the grant amounts for both credit and non-credit runs outside of the Town of Ocean City corporate limits. Increasing the grant for credit runs outside city limits from \$760 per run to \$1,458 per run and for non-credit runs from \$190 to \$364 would cover the deficit experienced in the current fiscal year. These rates should be reviewed on an annual basis to determine if they are still adequately covering the cost of response.

I think we all would agree that providing EMS Service to West Ocean City is essential to the health, safety and welfare of Worcester County residents and visitors. This issue is not just going to go away and it is imperative that the Town and County officials meet and work together to resolve this issue no later than January 31, 2020. If the Town is going to continue to provide medical response to the West Ocean City service area there must be a funding source to cover the total cost of this service.

Respectfully,



Rick Meehan
Mayor

cc: Worcester County Commissioners
Worcester County Administrator Harold Higgins
Ocean City Mayor and City Council
City Manager Doug Miller